

services, to open new markets, and to keep them open. This week, I will travel to Geneva, Switzerland and address the World Trade Organization to underline just how important free and open trade is to our future prosperity. Fast-track trade authority has been a crucial tool in this endeavor in the past, and it will become increasingly important to our ability to compete in the future with other countries for new markets, new contracts, and new jobs. This traditional trading authority will empower us to negotiate pro-growth, pro-American trade agreements that will maintain the momentum of our economy and ensure that American workers and American businesses can compete on a level playing field with the rest of the world.

America's leadership in building an open, fair world trade system is paying off in rewards for entrepreneurial initiative, higher wages for working Americans, incentives for technological advances and artistic creation, and prosperity for our Nation. By embracing the challenges of competing in the global marketplace in the 21st century, we can ensure continued growth for American businesses, prosperity for working Americans, and a brighter future for us all.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim May 17 through May 23, 1998, as World Trade Week. I invite the people of the United States to observe this week with ceremonies, activities, and programs that celebrate the potential of international trade.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fifteenth day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 7098 of May 21, 1998

National Maritime Day, 1998

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

The United States is and has always been a maritime Nation. Our history is tied to the sea—from the *Santa Maria* to the *Mayflower*, from clipper ships to ocean liners, from the Liberty Ships of World War II to the huge, efficient containerships of the 1990s—and our development as a Nation has paralleled the growth of our waterborne commerce.

As we look forward to the challenges of the 21st century, we continue to rely on our Nation's maritime industry and the U.S. Merchant Marine to keep America competitive in an increasingly global economy. Ships and barges carry more than one billion tons of commercial cargo annually between ports within our Nation. Internationally, more than 95 percent of our imports and exports by weight are transported on water—a total of more than one billion metric tons of cargo each year.

We also depend on America's maritime industry and Merchant Marine to fill a crucial role in protecting our national interests and the security of our allies. Throughout our history, in times of conflict or crisis, the owners, operators, and crews of U.S.-flag commercial vessels have provided vital sealift capability in support of our Armed Forces, advancing defense, peacekeeping, and humanitarian missions across the globe.

Our maritime industry has made many important contributions to the economic strength and defense capability of our Nation, and my Administration has worked with the Congress to implement new approaches to ensure the industry's continued viability. Our National Shipbuilding Initiatives are helping to improve the competitiveness of America's maritime industry by seeking to eliminate foreign subsidies, assisting the industry's international marketing efforts, eliminating unnecessary government regulations, and enhancing private sector financing of shipbuilding through Federal loan guarantees. Under the Maritime Security Program, the Federal Government contracts with owners and operators of U.S.-flag vessels to supplement our military sealift capability and gains access to a fleet of modern commercial ships and the sophisticated intermodal transportation system that supports it. Together, these programs protect our Nation's economic interests and our national security by ensuring that U.S.-flag vessels will always sail in the sea lanes of the world.

In recognition of the importance of the U.S. Merchant Marine, the Congress, by a joint resolution approved May 20, 1933, has designated May 22 as "National Maritime Day" and has authorized and requested the President to issue annually a proclamation calling for its appropriate observance.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 22, 1998, as National Maritime Day. I urge all Americans to observe this day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities and by displaying the flag of the United States at their homes and in their communities. I also request that all ships sailing under the American flag dress ship on that day.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-first day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 7099 of May 22, 1998

Prayer for Peace, Memorial Day, 1998

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

Today Americans live in a time of great hope. Our Nation is free, prosperous, and at peace. While very real dangers and problems still exist in the world, the Cold War is over, democracy is sweeping the globe, and old adversaries are forming new partnerships.